



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Grand Teton
National Park

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Grand Teton National Park News Release

Injured Climber Flown from Garnet Canyon

Grand Teton National Park rangers evacuated an injured climber by helicopter Monday morning, July 31, at approximately 7:30 a.m. Dan Vining, a 52-year-old resident of Plano, Texas, severely injured his left ankle Sunday afternoon, July 30, while descending in the Garnet Canyon moraine, just below the fixed rope, near the Lower Saddle, at an elevation of approximately 11,000 feet.

Vining had reached the summit of the Grand Teton earlier that day with a group of climbers, led by Exum Mountain Guides. A climber in the area ascended to the Lower Saddle and reported the accident to a ranger, who was on a mountain patrol there, at about 3:30 p.m. The ranger immediately responded to the scene, provided emergency medical assistance, and began helping Vining descend. Another ranger, who was also on patrol in the vicinity, descended to the scene, bringing a rescue litter and other rescue equipment. The rescue party placed Vining in the litter and carried him down to the Garnet Canyon Meadows – a descent of over 2,000 feet, involving difficult terrain. Two other Exum guides came upon the party and provided assistance during the rescue operation. Several climbers from private parties and three off-duty Grand Teton National Park employees also helped with the descent into the Meadows.

Rangers decided that flying Vining from the Garnet Canyon Meadows was a safer option – for both the rangers and the patient – than attempting to transport him in a rescue litter through the large boulder field below the Meadows area. Strong, erratic and gusty winds prevented rangers from utilizing the interagency contract helicopter Sunday night; however, calm weather Monday morning allowed the helicopter rescue operation to proceed. The helicopter flew to a landing zone in the Garnet Canyon Meadows, where rangers placed Vining inside the helicopter before transporting him to Lupine Meadows.

The helicopter landed at Lupine Meadows at approximately 8:00 a.m., and Vining was transported by a private vehicle to St. John's Medical Center in Jackson.

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